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REPLY OF SIGNOR ORLANDO, PREMIER OF ITALY, REGARDING THE
DISPOSITION OF FIUME ¹PARIS, *April 24, 1919.*

Yesterday, while the Italian delegation was assembled discussing an alternative proposal sent to it from the British Prime Minister, which had as object the conciliation of the opposing tendencies manifested on the subject of the Italian territorial aspirations, the Paris newspapers published a message from Mr. Wilson, the President of the United States, in which he expressed his own opinion in regard to some of the most serious problems that have been submitted to the judgment of the Conference.

The employment of a direct appeal to the different peoples is certainly an innovation in international relations. It is not my intention to complain about it, but I take official notice of it in order to follow this principle in my turn, inasmuch as this new system without doubt will contribute to giving the peoples a broader participation in international questions, and inasmuch as I have always personally been of the opinion that such participation was a sign of a new era. However, if such appeals are to be considered as being addressed to peoples outside of the governments which represent them, I should say, almost in opposition to their governments, I should have great regret in calling to mind that this procedure, which, until now, has been used only against enemy governments, is today for the first time being used against a government which has been, and counts on remaining, a loyal friend of the great American Republic—against the Italian Government.

I could also complain that such a message, addressed to the people, has been published at the very moment when the Allied and Associated Powers were negotiating with the Italian Government, that is to say, with the very government whose participation had been solicited and appreciated in numerous and serious questions which, up to now, had been dealt with in intimate and complete solidarity.

To oppose, so to speak, the Italian Government and people would be to admit that this great free people could submit to the yoke of a will other than its own, and I shall be forced to protest vigorously against such suppositions, unjustly offensive to my country.

¹ *New York Herald*, Paris Edition, April 25, 1919, p. 1.

I now come to the contents of the President's message: it is devoted entirely to showing that the Italian claims, beyond certain limits defined in the message, violate the principles upon which the new régime of liberty and justice among peoples must be founded. I have never denied these principles, and President Wilson will do me the justice to acknowledge that in the long conversations which we have had, I have never relied on the formal authority of a treaty by which I knew very well that he was not bound. In these conversations I have relied solely on the force of reason and justice upon which I have always believed and still believe the aspirations of Italy are solidly based. I have not had the good fortune of convincing him: I regret it sincerely, but President Wilson himself has had the kindness to recognize, in the course of our conversations, that truth and justice are the monopoly of no one, and that all men are subject to error.

While remarking that more than once the Conference has been brought to change its sentiments radically when it was a question of applying these principles, I do not believe that I am showing disrespect towards this high assembly. On the contrary, these changes have been, and still are, the consequence of all human judgment. I mean to say only that experience has proved all the difficulties which are met in the application of these principles of an abstract nature to infinitely complex and varied concrete cases. Thus, with all deference, but all firmness, I consider the application made by President Wilson in his message of his principles to Italian claims is unjustified.

It is impossible for me, in a document of this nature, to repeat the detailed proofs which have been produced in great abundance. I shall only say that one cannot accept without reservation the statements according to which the downfall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire implies a reduction of the Italian aspirations. It is even permissible to believe the contrary, that is to say, that at the very moment when all the varied peoples which constituted that empire seek to organize themselves according to their ethnic and national affinities, the essential problem set by the Italian claims can and must be completely solved. Now this problem is that of the Adriatic, in which is summed up all the rights of Italy, both ancient and modern, all her martyrdom throughout the centuries and all the benefits which she is destined to bring to the great international community.

The presidential message affirms that with the concessions which

she has received Italy would attain the barrier of the Alps, which are her natural defences. This is a concession of vast importance on condition that the eastern flank of that barrier does not remain uncovered and that there be included among the rights of Italy the line from Monte Neveso separating the waters which flow toward the Black Sea from those which flow into the Mediterranean.

Without that protection a dangerous breach would remain open in that admirable natural barrier of the Alps, and it would mean the rupture of that unquestionable political, historical and economic unity constituted by the peninsula of Istria.

I believe, moreover, that he who can proudly claim that it was he who proclaimed to the world the right of self-determination of nations, is the very person who must recognize this right to Fiume, ancient city, which proclaimed its Italianity even before the Italian ships were near; to Fiume, admirable example of national consciousness perpetuated throughout the centuries. To deny it this right for the sole reason that it has to do only with a small community, would be to admit that the criterion of justice toward nations varies according to their territorial expansion. And if, to deny this right, we fall back on the international character of this port, we see Antwerp, Genoa, Rotterdam—all international ports serving as an outlet for a variety of nations and regions without their being obliged to pay dearly for this privilege by the suppression of their national consciousness.

And can one describe as excessive the Italian aspiration for the Dalmatian coast, this boulevard of Italy throughout the centuries, which Roman genius and Venetian activity have made noble and great, and whose Italianity, defying all manner of implacable persecution throughout an entire century, today shares with the Italian nation the same feelings of patriotism? In regard to Poland, the principle is held forth that denationalization obtained by violent and arbitrary methods cannot constitute rights. Why not apply the same principle to Dalmatia?

And if we wish to support this rapid synthesis of our good national rights by cold statistical facts, I believe I can state that among the various national reorganizations which the Peace Conference has already brought about or may bring about in the future, none of the reorganized peoples will count within its new frontiers a number of people of another race proportionately less than that which would

be assigned to Italy. Why, therefore, is it especially the Italian aspirations that are to be suspected of imperialistic cupidity?

Despite all these reasons, the history of these negotiations will demonstrate that the firmness which was necessary to the Italian delegation was always accompanied by a great spirit of conciliation in seeking the general agreement that we all wished for fervently.

The Presidential message ends by a warm declaration of friendship of America toward Italy. I answer in the name of the Italian people and I proudly claim this right and this honor, which is due to me as the man who in the most tragic hour of this war uttered to the Italian people the cry of resistance at all costs: this cry was heard and answered with a courage and abnegation of which few examples can be found in the history of the world. And Italy, thanks to the most heroic sacrifices of the purest blood of her children, has been able to climb from an abyss of misfortune to the radiant summit of the most brilliant victory. It is, therefore, in the name of Italy that, in my turn, I express the Italian people's sentiment of admiration and deep sympathy for the American people.

EFFECT OF RESERVATIONS AND AMENDMENTS TO TREATIES

*Extract from Speech of Hon. Frank B. Kellogg in the U. S. Senate, Thursday, August 7, 1919, on the Treaty of Peace with Germany.*¹

The effect of reservations and amendments to treaties has been considered by the Supreme Court in a number of cases: *Doe v. Braden* (16 How. 622); *New York Indians v. United States* (170 U. S. 1); *Arkansas v. Kansas and Texas Coal Co.* (183 U. S. 185); the *Diamond Ring case* (183 U. S. 176).

In *Doe v. Braden* (16 How. 635), the effect of a reservation as to the validity of certain grants made by the King of Spain in Florida pending the negotiation of the treaty was considered, and Chief Justice Taney, writing the opinion of the court, said:

We have made this statement in relation to the negotiations and correspondence between the two governments for the purpose of showing the circumstances which occasioned the introduction of the eighth article, confirming Spanish grants made before the 24th of January, 1818, and annulling those made afterward; and also for the purpose of showing how it happened that the three large grants by

¹ Congressional Record, Vol. 58, No. 66, p. 3976, at p. 3981.